Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: OECD, ECON SUBJECT: DATES FOR 1977 OECD MINISTERIAL

REFS: (A) OECD PARIS 1104, (B) STATE 7564

1. IN HEADS OF DEL MEETING JANUARY 18, SYG VAN LENNEP, PUSHING FOR AN EARLIER MEETING THIS YEAR, PROPOSED MAY 11-12 AS DATES FOR THIS YEAR'S OECD MINISTERIAL, SANDWICHED BETWEEN LONDON NATO MINISTERIAL MAY 9-11 AND EFTA MEETING IN VIENNA SCHEDULED FOR THE WEEKEND. THOSE FEW DELEGATIONS WHO ADDRESSED THE ISSUE APPEARED TO ACCEPT VAN LENNEP'S PROPOSITION THAT AN EARLIER DATE WAS DESIRABLE THIS YEAR IN ORDER TO SEPARATE MINISTER-IAL FROM SUMMIT MEETING. NONE HOWEVER TOOK UP HIS OTHER ARGUMENT THAT EARLIER DATE WOULD OPEN OPTION OF SECOND MINISTERIAL IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER IF ONE SHOULD BE THOUGHT TO BE USEFUL. THERE WAS DIFFICULTY OVER SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR MAY 11-12 DATES BECAUSE OF OVERLAP WITH LAST DAY OF NATO MEETING. VAN LENNEP THOUGHT THIS COULD BE DEALT WITH BY HAVING FINANCE MINISTERS MEET FIRST DAY AND FONMINS SECOND. FEW DELEGATIONS WHO ADDRESSED THIS ISSUE PREFERRED MAINTAIN SCENARIO OF LAST TWO YEARS IN WHICH FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFIDENTIAL.

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WERE PRESENT DURING AT LEAST FIRST DAY OF MEETING.
EFTA MEMBER REPS OPPOSED OVERLAP WITH MAY 12 WHICH IS
ARRIVAL DATE FOR EFTA HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING IN
VIENNA

2.) US REP NOTED THAT NEW US ADMINISTRATION WOULD NEED SOME TIME AFTER INAUGURATION TO REVIEW OPTIONS ON

OECD MINISTERIAL AND CONSIDER CAREFULLY RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER MEETINGS BEFORE BEING ABLE TO AGREE TO SPECI-FIC DATES. GERMAN AND FRENCH REPS RESTRICTED THEIR OBSERVATION TO STATING IMPORTANCE OF ALLOWING TIME FOR NEW US ADMINISTRATION TO SORT OUT ITS PREFERRED SCHEDULE. FRENCH REP URGED VAN LENNEP TO UNDERTAKE PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS BEFORE RETURNING TO HEADS OF DEL MEETING WITH PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HAVE SUPPORT OF MAIN COUNTRIES. SYG. CONCLUDING THAT HE HAD DISCERNED A CONSENSUS FOR AN EARLY MEETING (THE FIRST HALF OF MAY), AGREED WITH FRENCH PROPOSAL AND SAID HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH DELEGATIONS WITHIN A WEEK OR TWO IN HOPE OF ARRIVING AT EARLY DECISION.

COMMENT: OPTIONS ON MINISTERIAL DATES AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER MAJOR EVENTS IN FIRST HALF OF 1977 ARE LAID OUT IN OUR 00981. WHILE EARLY MEETING BACK-TO-BACK SOMEHOW WITH NATO IS CERTAINLY ONE IMPORTANT OPTION AND MIGHT FACILITATE SECRETARY'S TRAVEL PLANS; VAN LENNEP'S SUMMATION THAT CONSENSUS EXISTS IN FAVOR OF EARLIER MAY MEETING IS OVER DRAWN AND SHOULD NOT BE DETERMINING IN CHOICE AMONG OPTIONS. KATZ

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